

# Toleration Defended:

OR, THE

## LETTER

From a Gentleman to a Member of Parliament concerning

## TOLERATION

CONSIDERED;

With some OBSERVES on

Mr. Meldrum's Sermon.

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*Psal. LIX. v. 12. Old Transl: -----For why? Their Preaching is of Cursing and Lies.*

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PSAL. CXXIV. Ver. 1, 2.

*If the LORD himself had not been on our side, when men rose up against us,  
They had swallowed us up quick, when they were so wrathfully displeased at us.*

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*Si DEUS pro nobis, quis contra nos?*

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Printed in the Year, 1703.

Mr George Brown  
Wt.



Printed in the Year 1853



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**B**ecause the anonymous Author of a *Letter to a Member of Parliament*, does in the first Paragraph of the third page, undertake to *set the dangerous consequences of a Toleration in its due light*; Its hoped the Reader will, by the help of what followeth here, discover some of those *Falshoods* and gross *mistakes* which that Author endeavours to obtrude upon the World for Truth and Reason.

And to make short work, and save Repetitions, the Reader is referred, to the several Paragraphs of the Authors Letter, by two Arithmetical Numbers, the first of which shall signify the Page, and the 2d. the Section.

3. 2. He acknowledges *Schism* to be both a *Sin*, and a *Judgement*: And who doubts, but that *Schism* is a *Sin* in the *Schismatick*, as well as a severe *affliction* to the Church, which suffers by it? But neither he, nor any of the party, for whom he appears, durst ever state a true Notion of *Schism*; or give us such a definition of it, as is Sufficient to Vindicate the *Reformation*, without blackening the whole *Presbyterian Party* with the dangerous guilt of that *damning Sin*. For which cause all he says on the head, is nothing else but a mere canting in generals, that may easily be refuted; and the *Scriptures* he cites, are as little to the purpose, as that the Devil cited, when he tempted the Saviour of Mankind, to throw himself down from the pinnacle of the Temple: Indeed, would all good Christians, but carefully mark those, that cause divisions, and avoid them. It's more than Probable, that *Presbyterians* (who are truly *Schismaticks* from the whole *Catholick Church*, in their business of *Parity*, as well as *Orders*) would have but very few followers.

Wherefore, by *Schisma*, we are to understand every willfull *Separation* from, or *Desertion* of the *Communion* of any part

part of the *Catholick Church*, where the terms of Communion are not Sinfull.

Also, to prevent mistakes about the name of a *Church*, It must always be understood of a Society of Christians united by Communion, under their Lawful Pastors, Canonically Ordained, by an uninterrupted Succession from the Apostles.

3. 4. 5. Are full of falsehoods; for there he tells us, *That because the Church* (by which he means the Presbyterian establishment) *imposes no sinfull terms of Communion*, and the Doctrine, Worship, Sacraments, and Censures being the same, with what was professed, and practised under *Prelacy*; no *Scruple of Conscience* can be alledged 'gainst joyning in Communion with them, and consequently no *necessity* can be pleaded for a *Toleration*.

Now if all this be true, how plainly does the Author charge the whole Presbyterian party with the guilt of Schism, for not Joyning, and constantly continuing in Communion with the Episcopal Church, at least when it was established by Law? And how hainously guilty must they be before God, not only on this account, but more especially for the *inhumane*, and *barbarous usages*, wherewith they male-treated the Episcopal Clergy, when they violently, or by false accusations thrust them out of their Benefices, and Livings? Is it possible that the *alterations* of State, or Civill establishments, can alter the nature of things, and make that Duty this year, which was Sin last year? Or does the present Establishment give them a better Right, to arrogate to themselves the *Name of the Church*, than the former Establishment gave the Episcopal?

But besides this, the *terms* of Communion are truly Sinfull, neither is the Doctrine, and Worship the same: For how can a man that's truly convinced in his Conscience, That Episcopacy is an Apostolical Constitution, and not only necessary to the well being, but even to the very being of a Church; It being impossible to have the comfortable use of the *Sacraments* without Lawfull Ordination, which can never be obtained without a Bishop: I say how can a man, that believes all this, Renounce Episcopacy, and declare that he looks u-

pon:



pon it as an unlawfull *Usurpation over the Church*? And yet this is one of the terms, and that, a *sine quo non* of Presbyterian Communion.

Were it not more prudent, as well as more safe for Presbyterians themselves, to come over entirely (as they have done occasionally, both before 66. and after the year 81) to the Episcopal Communion; especially since by these Instances, and their own constant practice, they do sustain the Validity of Episcopal Ordination (for they never Re-ordained any Episcopal Minister, that came over to their party) whereas the Validity of their own Orders is so very questionable, that they cannot trace it to any Original; no, not so far back as the Reformation: and consequently their Sacraments, and Ministrations (to say no worse) cannot possibly be either so comfortable, or so secure, as those of the Episcopal Communion.

But then, as to the *Worship*; It is so palpably altered, as to be very far short of what it was under Prelacy: have they not in their Praises excluded the Doxology? and in their Prayers laid aside the *Lord's Prayer*; notwithstanding our Blessed *Saviours* express command to use it, when we Pray? Have they not in Baptism cast out the Apostles Creed? And instead of that, substituted a vast number of Articles (which they do not repeat either) all contained in their own *Confession of Faith*, in which are several controverted Points of Doctrine, about which, Presbyterians themselves are not well agreed? Have they not also turned out of the Church, the publick Reading of the Scriptures? and out of hatred to all Liturgies, and set Formes of Prayer, do they not, amongst other bad Doctrines, teach men to disuse and neglect the *Lord's Prayer*? and to condemn Episcopacy as a thing unlawfull? and to censure and condemn, as unlawfull and Superstitious, what the whole Catholick Church hath alwayes enjoyned and observed in the Celebration of the Solemn Festivalls? and which as God hath no where forbidden, so gratitude, as well, as a due obedience to the Governours of the Church, obligeth us to observe. Is it not then a very strange

paradox of this Author, after all these considerations, to assert, that they of the Episcopal Church can have no scruple of Conscience 'gainst joyning with themselves in Communion, with whom there is no Communion; but upon these Sinful terms here enumerated.

(As to the insinuation (of overawing people, to hinder their joyning with them, and that, where they are at Liberty, they do freely and generally joyn with them) is false enough to a demonstration. For if the business were put to a Poll, there will be found in Scotland, many a Thousand, who never yet did, and if they are left to their own liberty, in all probability never will, bow their knee to the *Bank* of Presbytery, nor partake of the guilt of their most unreasonable Schisme.

4. He appeals to our Consciences, whether we do not reckon upon those things, wherein we and they differ, as being but merely indifferent things; and I do conscientiously declare, that I know none (who have seriously considered the state of the Question, as to the things in debate, and some of which I have here enumerated) that entertain such an opinion as to think them so.

4. 2. He alledges, That there are no penal Laws against such as dissent from them. Indeed if the Parliament would say so, we might look upon it as a very good Toleration: providing they would likewise lay down measures, for securing men from the violence of those, who will allow none to live, or enjoy any favour, but themselves.

But if this be true, how came it to pass, that the *Talbot* of Edinburgh was so frequently crammed with Ministers, meerly for Preaching; and that not only with such as did not comply with the Civil Government, but even with such as did? For example; Mr. *Jahn Park* did very early and constantly pray for King *William*, and publicly intimated and celebrated all his Fasts and Thanksgivings; and yet on the 13th. of December Anno 1694. he was laid up Prisoner tho' the very day before, he had intimated in his meeting-house, the observation of one of those Solemn days appointed



ed by the Government: Nay, at *Sterlin*, within these Two years the very Laicks were sadly harrassed and vexed for dissenting; and one Mr. *George Stammers* (who is no Clergyman) was put up in Prison, and therein detained most unmercifully, to the great prejudice of his Poor Family, till he was necessitated to give Bond, under penalty to keep the Church. Wherefore the Author must either acknowledge, That there are penal Laws against Dissenters, or else he must grant, That the Administrators of the Government in those days, did act very Arbitrarily (to say no worse) in using men so ill without Law; and consequently all wise and well nurtured men, will allow, That an express Toleration, for securing men from such Lawless troubles for the time to come, will not only be very just, but absolutely necessary.

4. In this 4th, the one part confutes the other. For if the design of a Toleration be to find a Maintenance for the Episcopal Ministers, then it seems, that the People by whom this Maintenance must be raised, are neither very few, nor very fond of Presbytery; but on the contrary, have a very just aversion from it: how else is it possible to perswade them, to part with their Money, for the support of those, whom otherways they could very well want.

As to his 5th, the hundred Episcopal Ministers, he talks of, who were continued in their Churches, had the protection of the Government before the resettlement of Presbytery, and Independent on them: and yet even of these, severals were either turned out, or very ill treated, notwithstanding their compliance with the Revolution, and Civil Government: and as to the easie terms he talks of, such as, Abjuring Episcopacy &c. enough hath been already said, to all which might be added, the ill usage of severals of our Complying Brethren, who yielded to them in all things, and yet are no more received into close Communion with them, than if they never had Complied.

4. 5. 6. As to his Arguments against Toleration, taken from unnecessary, and inconvenient; they had been every whit as good sense, and better against their own accepting of an

Indulgence from King Charles the 2d. or King James the Seventh.

But in his *Primo*, he talks of the bad effects, that the very *prospect of a Toleration* begins to produce: by which he cunningly insinuates, as if the *disorders*, he speaks of, proceeded from the Episcopal Clergy, or People: And in his 2do. 5. & 1. he tells us, *That a Toleration will occasion Divisions, and high irritation of humors, imbittering of Spirits, and factious practices.* But who is to blame for all this, but the same unruly Spirit of Disobedience, which hath, all along actuated the turbulent Zealots of the Authors own party: For it can never be supposed, that such a *Favour*, as a *Toleration*, will ever animate those, of the Episcopal persuasion (who have constantly behaved themselves peaceably, even under a suffering State) to become turbulent, and ill neighbours, and that even after they have obtained a *Deliverance* from their present *pressures*.

Indeed, the Disorders he talks of, are altogether to be expected from themselves; and the abuse at *Glasgow*, was nothing else, but the natural effect of their own *Turbulent and uncharitable disposition* toward all those, that are not entirely of their own mind.

Did ever the Episcopal Ministers or people while in power, directly or indirectly disturb the *Worship of Dissenters*; when they had the allowance of the State for it? And yet you see their *Zealots* raise the *Mob*, and call in the Country People in vast numbers from several Parishes; and, in contempt of the *Queen's Letter and Authority*, disturb the *Worship* of those who had her *Protection*: and by this means also they committed such abuses on the Lords day, as will be a lasting *Reproach* to their very *Professions to Christianity*, especially since their very *Preachers* never so much as opened their mouths, to censure or Rebuke that wicked *Madness* of the People.

§. 2. As to his 3tio. I leave the Presbyterians to answer that themselves: For they (having broken the good Order and constitution of the Church, in the days of King Charles the



the First ) they opened the door wide enough, to let in all that Deluge of Errours and Heresies, Scandals and Atheism, and Irreligion, which to this day afflict the Church, to the great grief of all sincere Christians; and this mischief can never, will never be amended, nor avoided, so long as the Schism does last: And as for his sling at those he calls *Arminian Teachers* and Introducers of Superstition; it's obvious he means the Liturgy, or service of the Church of England, which he calls *Superstition*; and to make it the more frightful to those, who have not duly considered the controversy, he ushers it in with the odious name of *Arminian Teachers*: But were the Author and his Friends as free of prejudice and ill nature, as the *English service* is of Superstition, or the Teachers he talks of, are of Heresie, then surely Presbyterians would be far more tolerable neighbours, than ever hitherto they have been, or than as yet, they are like to prove.

6. 1. I Readily grant, That its very unhappy, there should be any Schism in the Nation: but then who is to blame for it? They? or we? They, that actually have made it? or the Church, which suffers by it? And what method does the Author prescribe for curing this Maladie? Why, by no Toleration? That is, in plain Scots, by open persecution to destroy the Church, that the Schismaticks, having no competitors, may at length be mistaken for the Church: As to his Reflexion in the close of that Paragraph, on some great Persons, I shall leave it to the consideration of those whom it mostly concerns.

6. 2. His 5<sup>th</sup> begins false, as may appear by what hath been already said, For he supposes, that people have no Scruple of Conscience against joyning in Communion with them, whereas its most notorious, that the far more considerable, if not the far more numerous part of the people have a very just aversion from Presbytery; so far is that Model of Government from being so very agreeable to the Inclinations of the People, as is commonly pretended, that there needs no better demonstration, than their own fears, lest a Toleration

Toleration give People the opportunity of Second Thoughts. And accordingly he passeth from this, to the Introduction of *Prelacy*, and in case of a Toleration, he cannot be satisfied, what Bishops must have the *Inspection* of the *Clergy*? To all which, there needs none other, but this; That as the Order of Bishops does not derive its Original from secular powers, so neither does the Relation betwixt them, and those under their inspection and care, cease upon their being meerly denuded of their Temporal Incomes, Profits, or Honours. And as Primitive Christianity did very happily enjoy all the Orders, and degrees of the Clergy, without those secular encouragements and advantages; so may a Toleration now be very safely allowed, without the least hazard of fear, on the one hand, or hope on the other, of ever Restoring the Bishops to their Peerage or Benefices.

And since the very *Claim of Right* does not in the least meddle with the *Intrinsic power* of the Church; The Bishops at home may do the business, without sending People to *England*; and so his fears, of Subjecting the Crown of *Scotland* to a Dependency on that of *England*, will not only vanish, but are indeed very little to the purpose, urged by him in favours of a Party, who did so little regard the Honour and Independency of the Nation, either in their Surrender of King *Charles* the first to the *English*, or in their Cordiall Prayers to God, for the preservation, or Success, of our Interests in *Darien*.

As to his Argument taken from the standing Laws and the Claim of Right, he needs not be told, that it had never fared so well with *Presbyterians*. If it had never been in the power of one Parliament to mollify, and even sometimes to Rescind, and abrogate what another had enacted.

To the Objection, May not the *Episcopal Dissenters*, as he calls us, expect the same Liberty in *Scotland* which *Presbyterian Dissenters* enjoy in *England*, he answers.

That Dissenters in *England* are strained in their Consciences, and have exhibited the particular grounds & Reasons, why they cannot joyn with the established Church. But why may



may not our pretence to Conscience be as good as theirs. And that theirs is but a meer pretence, cannot be denyed by any, that does but remember, how the *Business of occasional Communion*, hath been so very lately, under the consideration of both Houses of *Parliament*: and because all our Country men do not understand this point, I shall a little explain it.

Both the *Scottish* and *English* Presbyterians do maintain, That it is as dangerous and damnable a sin to joyn with the Superstition and Idolatry (as some of them please to call it) of the Church of *England*, as to joyn with that of *Rome*. And yet by the example, and advice of their greatest Rabbies, they can, without any Scruple of Conscience, joyn with them in *occasional Communion*, that, is when, without they do so, they cannot be chosen members of *Parliament*, nor Sheriffs, nor Mayors of Cities.

Now, what for a Conscience, this *English* Presbyterian Conscience may be, cannot well be defined: For, if they cannot communicate with the Church of *England*, without being guilty of the *Damnable* Sins of *Superstition*, and *Idolatry*, how come they to do it at all? and if they can, at some set times, do it, without sin, how unconscientious is it, that, for the peace of the Church, they do not continue constant in its Communion? or, do their Leaders & Guides usurp a *Papal* *Prerogative*, to dispence with Conscience, when ever they think it makes for their Interest?

But besides this, the *English* Dissenters, in the grounds and Reasons alledged by them, for breaking the Communion of the Church, they do not so much as pretend, Episcopal Government, as one of the causes of their separation; and as some of their greatest men, have publicly avowed, they would be glad, with all their Heart, to have such an Episcopacy, as we have hitherto had in *Scotland*. And as this shews the unreasonableness of the *English* Dissenters, on the one hand, for making a Schism, on the account of those indifferent things, with which, upon occasion, and for secular ends, they can very freely comply; so on the other hand, the in-  
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nature of the Author, and his friends, may easily appear, by their being so Zealous against a Toleration, in favours of the *Episcopal Church in Scotland*, whose pretensions to Conscience are far more real, and far more deeply founded, as may easily appear, by what hath been already said, and is more fully to be seen in many excellent *Treatises*, and *Papers* Printed since the Revolution, which contradict all our Author's alledges to the contrary.

As to the new inventions, he pretends, were added to the Common Prayer at the Restoration, he can adduce none, that could displease Presbyterians more than the rest, unless it were the *Services* for the 30th. of January, and the 29th. of May, together with that excellent Prayer in the Litany, viz. *From all sedition, privy Conspiracy and Rebellion, from all false Doctrine, Heresy and Schisme, from Hardness of heart and contempt of thy word and Commandment, good Lord deliver us.* Now its well known, why Presbyterians cannot joyn in these Offices, otherways its not to be supposed, that these good prayers could ever have widened the breach, especially where the Dissenters were not against a Liturgy, providing they might have had the making of it themselves.

8. 1. As to what hath been written in defence of the *English non-conformity*, hath been answered so often, that it would be tedious, to enumerat all the Authors on that head; only if the Author and his friends would impartially, and without prejudice read and consider *Matthew Hale's Letters* to an *English Dissenter*, they will find there, as much, as is sufficient in reason, to stop their mouths, and silence their groundless murmurings, for ever.

8. 2. Leaving *England* to answer for it self, our Author can adduce no Instance in *Scotland*, of either man, or woman, who, (after the Restoration, untill the Revolution) was ever either severely used, or put to Death, meerly on the account of their perswasion; And when the Author produceth his Instances, he shall be cleared of his mistakes.

8. 3. As to his 210. If Presbyterians pretend, that they think themselves, not yet well enough secured in their Government



vernment, (because the *Supreme Magistrate*, and those in *Public Trust*, are under no obligations to be of their *Communion*) does not this plainly infer, that there is already a tacite *Toleration*; and if so, why are they so much afraid, and so far against the Parliaments declaring and owning of that, which, in a manner is already in being, by the very nature of the present constitution? or will nothing please them, unless they can order things so, as to render the state of the afflicted, from time to time, still worse and worse?

9. 1. As to the Objection, concerning the Fondness of Presbyterians to have a *Toleration*, when under hatches, and their averfness to grant *One*, when they are in Power; he gives no answer at all, but refers to what he had said before: And truly he had good reason thus to shift it, because the thing is indeed unanswerable.

9. 2. His consideration concerning the Episcopal Ministers in Churches, supposes false, as if they were there, by vertue of any Indulgence; For these men (by their early Compliance) had as good a title to the *Protection of the State*, before the resettlement of Presbytery, as Presbyterians themselves have to this very Hour. And tho' he complains of hard terms in King Charles the 1<sup>st</sup>. his time, yet his complaints are groundless; It being well known, that for several years after the *Restoration*, their greatest men lived in the Communion of the Church, and some of them did receive the Sacrament out of the Bishops own hand, so far were they, from looking upon the terms of Communion as Sinful, till after *Pentland Hills*.

9. 3. Nor were ever any of them required to Renounce their Solemn League and Covenant, till the State found it to be the argument of their Rebellion: and all the Sanguinary Laws, of which they so much complain, were nothing else, but the effects of their own *Rebellious and wicked practices*; against the King and Government: But did ever peaceable man, of that Party meet with any the least trouble, on the account of his perswasion? And how unfair, as well as unreasonable is it, to talk so much of the usage, wherewith

some mett, on the Scaffold, or in the Fields, without mentioning the cause, namely their being found in Arms, as Actors and Defenders of those Bloody Murders committed on the Archbishop of St. Andrews, the Gentlemen at the Swine Abby and others at Inch-bellie Bridge, and Carbellow Path: As also, on the Minister of Conesfaine, whom they most inhumanly murdered in his own Chamber? All which, to the great Reprach of Christianity, they did avowedly, and is as agreeable to their Principles, as it is natural for the shadow to attend the body. And if after all these their Bloody and inhuman Cruelties, their Sanguinary Declarations, and others, in which they proclaimed open War against the King, and his adherents (their Preachers mean while, without Scruple, Excommunicating all that were concerned in the Government) I say if after all these, and their consequent Rebellions, the Government thought fit, for their own safety to give Commission to the Souldiers, to put to death, whomsoever they should find in Arms, and owning these principles, I hope it will not be denyed, but that they themselves gave too much provocation to the State, to use them so.

And yet, even after Penibland-bills, Bishop Lightoun offered them, the most easie terms of Accommodation, desiring no more of them, but that they would concur with him in Discipline, by sitting with him in Synods and Presbyteries, allowing them withall, if they pleased, to protest, that their doing so, should by no means infer their submission to Episcopacy: and yet this, they absolutely refused to do.

10. 1. If the Metropolitan of all Scotland did so express Himself from the Pulpit, as if they were all brain-sick men, who separated from any Church, upon the account of Modest Forms of Government: Yet even in that Discourse, he supposed the Governours to be men Canonically Ordained, without which there can be no Church. And what Doctor Stridlingfleet wrote in his Youth, when he was full of the prejudices of his Education, he sufficiently retracted, when he came to ripper Years.

as the same was said by a Souldier in an account of his past years. And how much more reasonable is it, to think so much of the usage, when we come to the same.



1<sup>do</sup>. In this 2<sup>do</sup>. the Author charges *Perjury* on those, who having taken the Test, do own the Civil Government, if they do not likewise own the Presbyterian. Because, it was with consent of the Bishops, in Parliament declared to be the Kings Prerogative *To order and dispose of the External Government of the Church*, But in answer to all this Malicious, as well as Calumnious Charge, I shall here Transcribe him the *Termes*, in which the Test was Administrate to the Episcopal Clergy, taken out of the *Act of Council*, explaining the Test by the Kings approbation.

For by the Test. 1<sup>mo</sup>. We swear to the True Protestant Religion founded on the word of God, as it is opposite to Popery and Phanaticism.

2<sup>do</sup>. It is declared that by the Test, no Invasion, nor encroachment was made, or intended upon the *Intrinsic Spiritual Power of the Church*, or Power of the Keyes, as it was exerceed by the Apostles, and the most pure and Primitive Church in the first three Centuries after Christ, and which is still reserved to the Church.

3<sup>tio</sup>. That the Oath and Test is without any prejudice to the Episcopal Government of this National Church, declared by *Act 1<sup>st</sup> Sess. 2<sup>d</sup> Ch. II.* to be most agreeable to the word of God, and most suitable to Monarchy, and which His Majesty upon all occasions, had declared, he would Inviolably and unalterably preserve.

Now this being the true sense, in which the Episcopal Clergy took the Test, is it not a strange Inference of the Authors, namely: *Because the Episcopal Clergy are Sworn against Phanaticism; they are, ipso facto, perjured if they turn not Presbyterian?* And yet this is all, his Sophism can amount to.

To his 3<sup>tio</sup>. I need say no more, but with the Poet

*Quis tulerit Gracchos de Seditiōe quērentes?*

*Loripedem rēdus derident, Æthiopem Albus.*

Indeed tho' Episcopalls in Scotland cannot, perhaps, come up to all the measures of a Government, Yet so firmly are they perswaded concerning the *Dollrine of Non-resistance*, that all Sovetaign Princes can be more secure of their peaceable

able behaviour, without Oaths, than they can be sure of the sincerity of the Presbyterian party, even when they swear *Alliance*, or tender them such *Addresses* as that of their's to K. James the 7th, in which they professed the greatest *Loyalty* and *Thankfulness*, while in the mean time they were contriving his *Overthrow*.

But tell us plainly, are all Presbyterians, so very well satisfied with the *Civil Establishment*, as you seem, in your charge against the Episcopal, to insinuate? *Hirsuto spirant opobalsoma collo!* Does not your Association, or New Covenant smell rankly of the contrary? Not to mention your manner of qualifying the *Allegiance* and *Assurance*, when you swear and subscribe them: Nay it is Notour, that many of the Presbytery of *Ross*, as well as many others throughout the Kingdom, both Preachers and Laicks, do absolutely, it's well known upon what principle, refuse to qualify themselves.

In the end of the 10th page, the Author usurps too much on Gods Prerogative, in presuming to Judge, concerning Mens sincerity in their Prayers: Certainly if Men are for *free Prayer*, as all Presbyterians pretend to be, then, where there is no form prescribed, or imposed, a Man may lawfully use such terms, as are significant enough to express his thoughts to God, without giving offence unto Men: But this is still like one of the *Gracchi*, or rather a downright accusing of the Bretheren; and the Author knows very well whose part he Acts, in so doing.

But what are the Prayers in this point, that Presbyterians offer up unto God? There is no People under the Sun, that use to express themselves more Equivocally on this head, than they: And if the Author the Accuser's Oath of *Calumny* were demanded, whether he verily believes in Conscience, that Presbyterians have a greater and a more sincere *affection* for Her Majesty, than the Episcopal, I am confident he durst hardly swear for himself.

Page 11. As to what relates to the Addressers, they have sufficiently justified themselves to *Her Majesty*, and are



able enough to answer for what they have done. And, tho' *The Claim of Right* does call the *Episcopal Government*, *A Grievance*: Yet it does neither impugn nor deny it's *Apostolical Authority*: But if it did, must nothing be allowed to be *Apostolical*, but what the State of a Nation declares to be so? Does not the Commission of the Kirk suppose that *Iniquity may be established by a Law*: nay tho' you take in the *Providence of God* (as you commonly argue) to the *Wisdom of the Nation*, the Conclusion will be too General, without distinguishing betwixt a Providence of Judgement, and a Providence of Mercy: The Providence of God hath Established the *Turkish Religion in Asia*, and *Popery* in many Kingdomes in Europe, and *Pagan Idolatry* in many other places of the World, for a far longer Tract of time, than since the very first *Era* of *Presbytery*, and with a far more universal consent of the People, than can be pleaded for *Presbytery*: But if their Argument from the publick Establishment by the State were Good, whence came it, that *Presbyterians*, in the former Reigns, did not scruple to decry the then Established Church, as *Antiebristian Usurpation*? But in this, they still behave themselves like true *Gracchi's*.

The Sermons of the 30th of January are falsely charged with loading our whole Native Country, with the *Horrid Murder of King Charles the 1st*; For they only lay the charge of that Sin, to the Doors of those *Rebells*, who persecuted him, and delivered him up to the *English Murderers*: But to speak the truth; It very well becomes all Persons, (without distinguishing betwixt those that are *Guilty*, and those that are *Innocent*) sadly to lament *That horrid Act of unparallel'd Villany*, for which we need not doubt but that the heavy *Wrath of God*, is still hanging over our Heads: And yet the Author knows very well (for all the *Horrid Epithet* he gives that *Murder*) that *Presbyterians* do generally disown it to be a Murder, and none of them will so much as bow their knee to God, to Deprecate the Vengeance due to these Lands on that account; Nay some of our Fore Fathers were obliged to profess *Publick Repentance in Sackcloth*, for attempting to rescue the King from that danger.

Not to meddle with the Reflexions the Author hath  
 on some Statesmen, and not very indirectly on her Majesty :  
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 as necessary (and considering the premisses) much more now,  
 in favours of Episcopalls, than ever it was, during the for-  
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 Episcopal side? For whereas the greatest men of the Pres-  
 byterian Party, as they were bound in Conscience and duty,  
 had actually joyned in Communion with the Church, and yet  
 upon occasion, most unconscientiously did fly out into open  
 Rebellion both against the Church and the State, and encour-  
 age, and countenance, and keep up Communion with those  
 that did: so that there was not the least shadow of Reason,  
 even on the Authors own principles, to plead for a Tolera-  
 tion in their Favours: But on the other hand, Tho' Episcopal  
 People cannot, with a good Conscience, unite with Pres-  
 byterians, yet, when, or where did they ever raise a Rebelli-  
 on against the State? or encourage others to promote it?  
 and that notwithstanding all the Barbarities and Inhumane  
 treatment, wherewith they were entertained about the time of  
 the Revolution, not to mention their other sufferings ever  
 since?

And to come to a close, with this Gentleman Author. He  
 does in his last two Paragraphs insinuat, First, That the  
 things, wherein we differ, are only indifferent: The Falshood  
 of which may appear, by what hath been already said. Secondly,  
 That the Episcopals are guilty of Introducing humane Inven-  
 tions into the Worship of GOD; but adduces no Instance to  
 that purpose; wherefore we may suppose his meaning to be  
 That some of them are for a Liturgy: And to free the Liturgy  
 from the Charge of Humane Inventions the Reader is hereby  
 referred to Bishop Kings Book concerning Humane Inventions  
 in the Worship of GOD; a Book of a truly Evangelical strain,  
 and which will be so reputed, by all Judicious men, Not-  
 withstanding all that hitherto hath been, or can hereafter be  
 said against it.

By the King's most Excellent Majesty



T. 11

tion. He supposes, That our Zeal for this, would stir us up to persecute all those, who are not for these brats of our own brain; as he pleases to phrase it. But what danger is there of all this, if, (as he alledges) the far greater part of the people are for Presbytery? But besides this he judges of the Episcopal, by the measures of their own Presbyterian temper and disposition, esteeming the Liturgy, just such an other thing as their Solemn League, for which mens Zeal many times transported them beyond the bounds of their duty, to commit the most unheard of Cruelties and Villanies, for which if they met with any severities, it was their own fault. And so all the grievous complaint aient persecution and Sanguinary Laws in reference to Presbyterians, while other grievous offenders past unpunished, amounts to no more than this, That the Laws against Rebellion were put in execution against Presbyterian Rebels, whilst other Criminals were not put to Death by virtue of these Laws.

But here the Reader may take notice of two Grossly base Insinuations. 1<sup>st</sup> That the State in those days, countenanced, or connived at all Crimes, except Presbyterian Rebellion.

2<sup>do</sup>. That there were none of these wicked and abominable things, he speaks of, to be found amongst those of their Party.

Now for confutation of both these, the Reader is hereby referred to the Records of the Criminal, and Circuit Courts in those days, by which one may easily perceive how false and Calumnious both these Insinuations are.

From thence he takes a leap into England, and by the Authority of one Hickeringil, accuses that whole Church and State, as great Fautors of, or Connivers at, all the most vicious Crimes of Murder, Adultery, Incest &c. never excommunicating any persons for these Crimes, but many for neglecting to use a Ceremony.

I doubt not but the Church of England (which is the Glory of the Reformation, as well as the Bulwark of the Protestant Religion) is easily able to answer all this black Charge: And it ill becomes those, who live at this distance,  
C and

and cannot know the truth of the Instances, that ought to be adduced in such a case, to Print and publish such a *blackening Accusation*, not against one or two Clergy men only, but against a whole national Church; and that upon the single Testimony of one, who hath made so many various figures in the World, that its hard to know to which side he belongs.

And now follows the *Conclusion* of the Letter, in which the Author calls in the force of all his Arguments against a *Toleration*, in favours of the *Episcopal Church*. And yet unless he can particularly adduce instances, wherein people were driven from their *Native Country*, meerly for their perswasion, and the *Prisons* and *Rocks of the Sea* were cramm'd with any other *Godly people*, than such as were found in open *Rebellion*, or had *Intigared* or concurred with the *Rebells*, all he says amounts to no more, but this:

That if a *Toleration* should be granted, It is possible, *Episcopacy* may be *Restored*: And if *Episcopacy* should be restored, (Tho' *Presbyterians* can, in Conscience, as they are obliged in duty, and as they frequently have done, *comply and joyn with it*) yet they are resolved in spite of *Conscience* and *Duty* too, to *Rebell*: And if they *rebell*, they may perhaps miscarry, as they did at *Pentland-hills* and *Bothwell-Bridge*: And if they miscarry, some of them may be *Slain* upon the Spot, and others of them taken *Prisoners*: and if they be taken *Prisoners*, some of their *Leading men* may chance to suffer on a *Scaffold*, in presence of their dearest friends; and others of their mis-led *Rabble* may happen to be laid up for some time, in *Tolbuiths*, or *Bass* or *Dunottar*; And thence he inters, *That no Toleration must be granted*, lest he and his *Friends*, the *Presbyterians*, *Rebell*: and is not this a down right *Threatning* of the *Government*?

But the *Book of may-bees* is no more, but just as broad as the *Book of may-no-bees*: And tho' a *Toleration* be granted, perhaps *Prelacy* will not be restored: And tho' *Prelacy* should be restored, yet *Presbyterians* (if they please) may forbear to *Rebell*; and so save themselves, from *Scaffolds*, *Imprisonments*, and *Banishments*: And so all the Authors large *Insu-*  
rangue



*range* on this head, is nothing else but ridiculous stuff, which serves to no other purpose, but to let men see the unchristian, implacable, and ungovernable Temper and Disposition of him, and his whole Party.

And now, having done with the Letter, it will not be amiss, to present the Reader, with some observes on Mr. Meldrum's Sermon; preached May 16. 1703. in the New Church of Edinburgh.

And First, he all along begs the Question, taking it for granted; That by the Church, the Temple and Jerusalem; we are only to understand the Presbyterian Government and Party; and by consequence, that all others of different Perswasions, whether Protestant or Papish, are all out of the Church, and no better than Heathens and Pagans; here you have one touch of his Charity: But if you'll grant the same favour to any other Sect or party of Men professing Religion, (who questionless will own themselves to be of the Church) all M. M. says to purpose, is nothing else but *Argumentum commune*, and such as might be used with as good, if not with far better reason, by some of them against Presbytery, than by Presbyterians for it. And if this be true, what severe Judgements may these Edomites Expect, from God Almighty, who disturbed the peace; and did, what in them lay, to raze the very Foundations of his Church, An. 1688.

2do. Page 9th. Sect. 5th. He Avouches himself to be the Servant of a Great Master, and yet he is somewhat diffident concerning his warrant, and even, whether what he delivered, should be found, upon Examination, agreeable to the word of God: as may appear by his, *if I have a warrant*: and *I hope I shall deliver nothing, but &c.* And truly he had good reason to entertain these Scruples, because if there be the least doubt, concerning the validity of his Ordination, which is God's ordinary way of giving a Warrant, or Mission to Preach, M. M. had need to be very sure of an extraordinary Mission, lest at last he be found amongst those, who did run, tho' God did not send them. Pag. 10th. Numb. 3d. He does what he can to excite the State, to Suppress Mass-meet-

ings: But how does this agree with the carriage of Presbyterians *Anno 87.* when they not only accepted of a Toleration, (by which publick Masses, as well as Presbyterian Preaching was allowed) but likewise thanked the King for it. Nay and some thanked God too. That, at that time, The Popish and Presbyterian Parties were embroiled in the same bottom against the Episcopal Church, and so they were: just like Herod and Pontius Pilate, united to Crucify Christ again, in his Mystical body. Nay one of their simple followers owned so much at Strathoven, while he was assisting to tear the Ministers Gown: For being demanded by a grave Gentle woman, how they came to treat the Minister so rudely, and un-Christially, their Souldier answered, *was not Christs own Garment torne?* and why should not their Gowns be torne too? ON HIS BOWING

Now, let the unbyassed Reader Judge, whether it was God, or the Devil, that did shut the Mouths of Presbyterian preachers at that time, that not one of them ever heard of (save good Mr. Hardie, for which he incurred the displeasure of the Court) did so much as open their mouthes to preach against publick Masses, or the growth of popery. Nay at that time, so far were they from preaching against popery, That presbyterians, as well as papists, did wickedly declame against such of the Bishops, and their Clergy, as were not for the Toleration, or the Abrogation of the Penal Satutes: And some presbyterians had the Impudence, publicly in discourse to avow, that the seven English Bishops did well deserve to be hang'd, drawn and Quartered, upon that account.

Page 10 and 11 Numb. 4th. He relapses again into his *argumentum commune*, and (bating her Majesties promise, to protect the presbyterian Government, and which, notwithstanding a Toleration, can be very well kept) all he says, may, with far greater reason, be urged in favours of Episcopacy, and if so, there is no small reason to fear, least (for all they arrogate the name of the Church to themselves) God reckon with Mr. M. and his bretheren, and followers, as no better than the Edomites of whom he speaks, and whom God will not forget, for what they did to his Church *Anno 68.* and ever since have been a doing, or designing. And



And now leaving the *Business* of *Patronages*, to be managed by a better Pen: We shall consider a 2<sup>d</sup> Instance of this preachers Charity; we have it, p. 12. *Self*. 2. compar'd with p. 14. *Self*. 1<sup>st</sup>. In the first of these, he professeth, *That he is neither by principle, nor inclination for Violence*. Not he forsooth! and yet he doubts the sincerity of his own Heart in this point; so that, not without good Reason, Fortho' M. M. is clear to grant ease to tender consciences, and supposes, that Episcopalians have no scruple of conscience, gainst joyning with Presbyterians, yet Mr. George, page 14<sup>th</sup> adduces one very Notable Instance of a Tender Conscience; Namely, a persuasion concerning the Necessity of Episcopal Ordination: and this M. M. thinks should not be Tolerate in any protestant Church: And is not this a wonderful condescension of his to tender Consciences? If people have no scruple of Conscience, then they must have no Toleration: very good! Ay but if they have the greatest scruple, that can be supposed, they must by no means have any Toleration at all; Is not this admirably better? Might not M. M. in fewer words, and without gulling people, with an opinion of his aversness from Violence, have told them plainly; *That he was for no Toleration, on any account whatsoever?*

As to the four things he premises page 12<sup>th</sup>, I shall readily grant him

1<sup>st</sup>. That *there not only ought to be, but actually there was, a very well established Government of a National Church in this Kingdom from Anno, 62. to 88.* with which M. M. very well could, and I do Charitably believe, did with a good Conscience joyn in Communion, for about 20 years together; and to one of the Governours of which, (I mean the Bishop of Aberdeen) M. M. did on the 15<sup>th</sup> day of January 1662. Subscribe Canonical obedience, obliging himself to be accountable to his Ordinary, the Bishop of Aberdeen then living, and his Successors, for his preachings, and Ministrations; and to contribute his endeavours for the peace of the Church, owning its Government, so as to give obedience thereto, in all things Lawfull; and to concur in Ecclesiastical meetings

*meeting*: And if all this be true (as I am confident M. M. will not deny) I shall leave it to his own Conscience to consider, what an account he must, perhaps shortly make to God, for breaking the peace of the Church, as well as this, his Solemn promise and obligation.

His Second and third positions shall likewise be granted, with this amendment, That the case of pleading for a Toleration in Scotland, is far more favourable, than that in England, as may appear, by what hath been said on the Letter, and by this means, his fourth position is sufficiently confuted. As to his Proclamation Page 13th. consents and approves it pass into an Act of Parliament, with this addition, That Episcopal Ministers, being allowed to Preach in Churches, or meeting Houses, wherever they shall have encouragement, no person shall presume, (under such pains as the wisdom of the Nation shall think fit) to hinder, or flatter, or bribe their Servants, or Tenants, but leave it to their own free choice, to hear either the Episcopal Minister, or the Presbyterian Preacher, as they please: And it's not doubted, but that there would be found as many Johnstouns, for Episcopacy, in the West, as M. M. can muster Jardines, for Presbytery in the North.

And now M. M. and I having commenced Dictators to the Parliament, we want nothing but the Honour to sit in the Bishops place, and give our vote: however, its not unreasonable to hope, That from such a good beginning, as this is, having thus settled the Church, he and I may come, in process of time, to have a good hand in ordering the State.

What follows, in his 13th. page, is already fully answered, in what hath been said upon the Letter: And to pass his Arguments taken from the Authority of some private Doctors (concerning the validity of presbyterial Ordinations, as being, not only of no weight against the constant Doctrine & practice of the Catholick Church, But indeed, nothing at all to M. M's. purpose, unless it appear, that his Authors do justify Ordination by Presbyters, tho' done in Neglect, or contempt of Episcopal Ordination, when it may be bad; which is the case



case of M. M. and his Friends, ) Let us consider his Argument in the end of the first Sect. Page 15th. which is one of the strangest, that ever dropped from the mouth, or pen of a Professor of Theology : his words are These ;

*Episcopal Ministers would remember, how they blamed some of the Presbyterian way, for withdrawing from them in publick worship, and would beware to imitat them, in what they do condemn.*

A rare Argument indeed ! His design is to persuade Episcopal Ministers, to joyn in Worship with presbyterians, and yet the very Argument he adduces (if it conclude directly) infers the quite contrary ; or supposes false, or consists of four Terms, which is, by one, too many for a Syllogism ; and to make this appear, I shall put his Argument in the best form I can.

Whatsoever *Episcopals* did condemn in others, That they ought not to do themselves :

But *Episcopals* did condemn *presbyterians*, for withdrawing from the *Episcopal Communion*, and setting up their own *Schismatick Conventicles* :

Ergo, The *Episcopals* ought to withdraw from *Episcopal Communion*, and turn *Presbyterian*.

And is not this a strange Argument ? would not one have thought ; that the conclusion ought to have been Negative, because the Major is so ? had this Argument been proposed by an *Episcopal Minister*, I should have readily granted, that he deserved, for want of Logick, to be reck'ned amongst their *Ignorant Clergy* : But from the Mouth of one of their *presbyterian professors of Theology*, and a preacher too, of a very long standing, It's even as good an Argument 'mongst them as ever *Aristotle* made in his Life.

Now, *Sophisms* ( which are but *Eyes*, and *Falshoods* in Logick, these that tend to misguide the Will, being always reputed far worse, than those that do only impose upon the Judgement ) are only taught in *Schools*, to make wise, and good Men know, and shun them : But to see them Sanctified from the *Pulpit*, the *Chair of Verity*, and in earnest used

in order to persuade the Practice, is but a very bad Argument, That, either the Preacher had his *Warrant* from God, for what he said, or that he really designed to speak nothing, but what was agreeable to Gods word.

In his last Section page 15th: He most sadly transgresseth the Rules of Morality, and under the *Cover* of some words taken out of Scripture, which yet, are none of Gods words but those of a Heathen King, he falls, down right, a *Curfing* & *Banning* all, that design a *Toleration*, or any *Alteration* of *Presbytery*, of which he seems to take the *Material City* and *Temple of Jerusalem* only to be *Types*; praying the *God of Heaven* to *destroy all Kings & people* &c. quite contrary to the *Serain* of the Gospel, which commands us, to *bless them that curse us*, and to *pray for them*, which *Spiesally* use us, and *persecute us*;

Besides this, 'tis very remarkable, that *M. M.* in this *Epilogue*, most saucily supposes; That all *Kings, and people*, who are not *presbyterian*, and for their *Governments*, are no better than *Tatnai's* and *Shetharboznai's*; that is, but *Heathens* and *pagans* at the best.

And least *God* should not hear his prayers, he comes at last like *Junio* to his *Threatnings*, telling *Esther*, (and 'tis well known, who 'tis he means by *Esther*) That *She shall not Escape in the Kings house*: But that there will arise *deliverance to the Jews* (That is the *presbyterians*) from another place: Which in plain *English*, and *Scottish* too, is as much as to say, these *Jews* have a mind to play *Esther*, just such another trick, as they have formerly served some of Her *Royal Ancestors*; And to make this yet plainer, he tells Her, to her Face, at least in the person of her *Representative*, That *she & Her Fathers house shall be destroyed*: And is not all this very like *Junio* in the poet?

*Esther si nequeo Superas, Acheronta movebo.*  
But from such unchristian prayers and preachings, All-mighty *God* deliver the poor deluded people of these *Lands*: A M E N.

John Denton in the City of London, 7th Cal. Junij, 1793.

E I N I S





